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17473
25.4.2

Garrick - Bon Ton - 1822.



17473.25.4.2



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FROM

Horace W. O'Connor

[Handwritten signature]



Orberry's Edition.

BON TON;

OR,

HIGH LIFE ABOVE STAIRS.

A FARCE.

WITH PREFATORY REMARKS.

THE ONLY EDITION EXISTING WHICH IS FAITHFULLY MARKED
WITH THE STAGE BUSINESS, AND STAGE DIRECTIONS,

AS IT IS PERFORMED AT THE

Theatres Royal.

BY W. OXBERRY, Comedian.

London.

PUBLISHED FOR THE PROPRIETORS, BY W. SIMPKIN, AND
R. MARSHALL, STATIONERS' COURT, LUDGATE STREET,
AND C. CHAPPLE, 59, PALL-MALL.

1822.

17473.25.4.2



Horace W. O'Connor

From the Press of W. Oxberry,
8, White-Hart Yard.

Remarks.

The second title—"High Life *above* Stairs,"—which is generally prefixed to this farce, shews plainly enough whence the author derived the hint of his drama, and the views he had in composing it. The satire of "High Life Below Stairs" having succeeded in exposing and diminishing the profligacy of domestics, he has here aimed at effecting a similar reformation amongst their employers, by placing the follies of fashionable life in a very odious and contemptible point of view. Whether the picture is quite correct, we pretend not to determine; but, it appears to have been thought so by the writer's contemporaries, with whom it was a remarkable favourite. He indeed rested his chance of success upon strong grounds, for the dramatist who inveighs bitterly against foreign fashions, manners, servants, and cookery; the dissipation of the higher orders; and the contamination their morals are said to experience from a residence abroad, adopts an almost infallible method of securing applause in an English Theatre. The latter subject was an incessant topic of lamentation among the croakers of the last generation. Johnson's jocose remark that "all foreigners are fools," was by them parodied into "all foreigners are knaves;" and the Grand Tour was believed to place in jeopardy both the souls and bodies of those who were so weak as to undertake it. For a quarter of a century, during the exclusion of our youth from France and Italy, the apprehensions of moralists upon this score were suffered to lie dormant; but, with the return of peace has returned the old panic, and we are again in danger of seeing our comedies and farces filled with monstrous caricatures of travelled fops, infected with all the vices, real and imaginary, of our continental neighbours.

The piece before us is rather a comedy in miniature than a farce, according to the notions at present entertained of the latter class of compositions. We are accustomed to look for a far stronger species of excitement than sufficed to tickle the palates of our grandsires; and, after having fed upon the highly seasoned dishes of equivoque and ludicrous incident placed before us by modern farce-writers, we have little stomach for mere satire, however spirited, or delineations of character, however accurate. The after-pieces of Colman and O'Keefe have completely driven from the stage those of Garrick and Foote; and though we esteem the old compositions highly, their successors have so many fascinating quali-

ties, that we scarcely know how to regret the change.—
 “Not that we love Cæsar less, but that we love Rome more.”

We should nevertheless regret to see “*Bon Ton*” banished altogether from the Theatre. The dialogue is delightfully lively; the unsophisticated integrity of the country knight is excellently contrasted with the polished heartlessness of his town relatives; and the readiness with which the domestics ape the follies of their superiors, is handled in a manner which seems clearly to betray the pen that lashed their knavery in “*High Life Below Stairs*.” The paucity of incident somewhat tasks the patience of a modern audience; yet the situations at the close of the first act are highly effective, and few surprises are better contrived than that in the second. *Sir John Trotley’s* lamentations over the decay of old fashions, and his antipathy to modern improvements, seem to have supplied the hint of a popular character in one of Mr. Jameson’s comedies, which has hitherto enjoyed the credit of being perfectly original. *Davy* and *Jessamy* are pleasant reprobates, and *Miss Tittup* is a most captivating coquette. Of her virtue perhaps we must not speak very highly; but as in the end, her rigid uncle seems to be satisfied upon that point, and the lady declares, as usual, that her head and not her heart was in fault, we shall not be so ill-bred as to question her veracity.

The moral of this piece has been warmly commended, though we scarcely know for what reason. Gaming and some other fashionable vices are satirized, ’tis true; but, the intrigues of two dissipated females, whose chastity totters throughout, and is at last preserved by mere accident, though they may serve to amuse young ladies and gentlemen of eighteen, are not likely to contribute much to their edification; especially as the culprits do no harsher penance for their folly than that of taking “a little country air,” while their would-be seducers march off triumphantly.

“*Bon Ton*” was first performed at Drury Lane Theatre, on the 18th of March, 1775, and was printed in the same year, with the following encomium upon Mr. King prefixed to it. Such a compliment, proceeding at the close of his career from such a man as Garrick, must have imparted no common gratification to the object of it:—

“This little drama was brought out last season for the benefit of Mr. King, as a token of regard for one, who, during a long engagement, was never known, unless confined by real illness, to disappoint the public, or distress the managers.” P. P.

Costume.

LORD MINIKIN.

French coat, white waistcoat and breeches.

SIR JOHN TROTLEY.

Brown suit, trimmed with silver.

COLONEL TIVY.

Blue regimental coat, white waistcoat and breeches.

DAVY.

Old-fashioned livery.

JESSAMY.

Slate-coloured coat, white waistcoat and breeches.

LADY MINIKIN.

White satin dress, trimmed with silver.

MISS TITTUP.

White sarsnet dress, trimmed with pink, and white crape upper dress.

GYMP.

Blue muslin gown and white apron.

Persons Represented.

		<i>Drury Lane.</i>	<i>Covent Garden.</i>
<i>Lord Minikin,</i>	-	Mr. Penley.	Mr. Jones.
<i>Sir John Trotley,</i>	-	Mr. Dowton.	Mr. W. Farren.
<i>Colonel Tivy,</i>	-	Mr. Barnard.	Mr. Abbot.
<i>Jessamy,</i>	-	Mr. Russell.	Mr. Farley.
<i>Davy,</i>	-	Mr. Munden.	Mr. Emery.
<i>Mignon,</i>	-	Mr. Buxton.	Mr. Menage.
<i>Lady Minikin,</i>	-	Mrs. Edwin.	Mrs. Gibbs.
<i>Miss Tiltup,</i>	-	Miss Kelly.	Miss Brunton.
<i>Gymp,</i>	-	Mrs. Scott.	Miss Green.

PROLOGUE.

WRITTEN BY GEORGE COLMAN, Esq.

SPOKEN BY MR. KING.

*Fashion in every thing bears sov'reign sway,
And words and periwigs have both their day;
Each have their purlieus too, are modish each
In stated districts, wigs as well as speech.
The Tyburn scratch, thick club, and Temple tye,
The parson's feather-top, frizz'd broad and high!
The coachman's cawdiflower, built tiers on tiers!
Differ not more from bags and brigadiers,
Than great St. George's, or St. James's styles;
From the broad dialect of Broad St. Giles.*

*What is Bon Ton? Oh, damme, cries a Buck—
Half drunk—ask me, my dear, and you're in luck!
Bon Ton to swear, break windows, beat the watch,
Pick up a wench, drink healths, and roar a catch.
Keep it up, keep it up! damme, take your swing!
Bon Ton is Life, my boy; Bon Ton's the thing!*

*Ah! I loves life, and all the joys it yields—
Says Madam Fusseck, warm from Spital-fields.
Bone Tone's the space 'twixt Saturday and Monday,
And riding in a one-horse chair o' Sunday!*

*'Tis drinking tea on summer afternoons
At Bagnigge-Wells, with china, and gilt spoons!
'Tis laying by our stuffs, red cloaks, and pattens,
To dance Cow-tillions, all in silks and satins!*

*Vulgar! cries Miss. Observe in higher life
The feather'd spinster, and thrice feather'd wife!
The Club's Bon Ton. Bon Ton's a constant trade
Of Rout, Festino, Ball, and Masquerade!*

*'Tis plays and puppet-shews; 'tis something new!
'Tis losing thousands ev'ry night at loo!
Nature it thwarts, and contradicts all reason;
'Tis stiff French stays, and fruit when out of season;*

PROLOGUE.

*A rose, when half a guinea is the price;
A set of bays, scarce bigger than six mice;
To visit friends you never wish to see;
Marriage 'twixt those, who never can agree;
Old dowagers, drest, painted, patch'd, and curl'd;
This is Bon Ton, and this we call the world!*

*Such is Bon Ton! and walk this city through,
In building, scribbling, fighting, and virtue,
And various other shapes, 'twill rise to view.
To-night our Bayes, with bold, but careless tints,
Hits off a sketch or two, like Darly's prints.*
Should connoisseurs allow his rough draughts strike 'em,
'Twill be Bon Ton to see 'em and to like 'em.*

}

* Darly was the name of a celebrated caricature-seller, in the Strand.

Time of Representation.

The time this piece takes in representation is one hour and
a half.

Stage Directions.

By R.H. is meant Right Hand.
L.H. Left Hand.
S.E. Second Entrance.
U.E. Upper Entrance.
M.D. Middle Door.
D.F. Door in flat.
R.H.D. Right Hand Door.
L.H.D. Left Hand Door.

BON TON; OR, HIGH LIFE ABOVE STAIRS.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*An Apartment at Lord Minikin's.*

Enter LADY MINIKIN and MISS TITTUP, R.H.

Lady M. It is not, my dear, that I have the least regard for my lord; I had no love for him before I married him, and you know, matrimony is no breeder of affection; but it hurts my pride, that he should neglect me, and run after other women.

Miss T. But pray, have you made any new discoveries of my lord's gallantry?

Lady M. New discoveries! why, I saw him myself yesterday morning in a hackney-coach, with a minks in a pink cardinal; you shall absolutely burn yours, Tittup, for I shall never bear to see one of that colour again.

Miss T. Sure she does not suspect me.—(*Aside.*)—And where was your ladyship, pray, when you saw him?

Lady M. Taking the air with Colonel Tivy in his carriage.

Miss T. But, my dear Lady Minikin, how can you be so angry that my lord was hurting your pride, as you call it, in the hackney-coach, when you had him so much in your power, in the colonel's carriage?

Lady M. What, with my lord's friend, and my friend's lover!—(*Takes her by the hand.*)—O fye, Tittup!

Miss T. Pooh, pooh, love and friendship are very fine names, to be sure, but they are mere visiting acquaintances; we know their names indeed, talk of 'em sometimes, and let 'em knock at our doors, but we never let 'em in, you know.

(*Looking roguishly at her.*)

Lady M. I vow, Tittup, you are extremely polite.

Miss T. I am extremely indifferent in these affairs, thanks to my education.—We must marry, you know, because other people of fashion marry; but I should think very meanly of myself, if after I was married, I should feel the least concern at all about my husband.

Lady M. I hate to praise myself, and yet I may with truth aver, that no woman of quality ever had, can have, or will have, so consummate a contempt for her lord, as I have for my most honourable and puissant Earl of Minikin, Viscount Perriwinkle, and Baron Titmouse.—Ha, ha, ha!

Miss T. But, is it not strange, Lady Minikin, that merely his being your husband should create such indifference? for certainly, in every other eye, his lordship has great accomplishments.

Lady M. Accomplishments! thy head is certainly turned; if you know any of 'em, pray let's have 'em; they are a novelty, and will amuse me.

Miss T. Imprimis, he is a man of quality.

Lady M. Which, to be sure, includes all the cardinal virtues—poor girl!—go on!

Miss T. He is a very handsome man.

Lady M. He has a very bad constitution.

Miss T. He has wit.

Lady M. He is a lord, and a little goes a great way.

Miss T. He has great good nature.

Lady M. No wonder—he's a fool.

Miss T. And then his fortune, you'll allow—

Lady M. Was a great one—but he games, and, if fairly, he's undone: if not, he deserves to be hanged—and so, exit my Lord Minikin.—And now, let your wise uncle, and my good cousin Sir John Trotley, Baronet, enter: where is he, pray?

Miss T. In his own room, I suppose, reading pamphlets

and newspapers against the enormities of the times; if he stays here a week longer, notwithstanding my expectations from him, I shall certainly affront him.

Lady M. I am a great favourite; but it is impossible much longer to act up to his very righteous ideas of things.—Is it not pleasant to hear him abuse every body, and every thing, and yet always finishing with a “You’ll excuse me, cousin!”—Ha, ha, ha!

Miss T. What do you think the Goth said to me yesterday? One of the knots of his tie hanging down his left shoulder, and his fringed cravat nicely twisted down his breast, and thrust through his gold button-hole, which looked exactly like my little Barbet’s head in his gold collar;—“Niece Tittup,” cries he, drawing himself up, “I protest against this manner of conducting yourself both at home and abroad.”—“What are your objections, Sir John?” answered I, a little pertly.—“Various and manifold,” replied he; “I have no time to enumerate particulars now, but I will venture to prophecy, if you keep whirling round the vortex of pantheons, operas, festinos, coteries, masquerades, and all the devilades in this town, your head will be giddy, down you will fall, lose the name of Lucretia, and be called nothing but Tittup ever after.—You’ll excuse me, cousin!”—and so he left me.

Lady M. O, the barbarian!

Enter GYMP, L.H.

Gymp. A card, your ladyship, from Mrs. Pewitt.

Lady M. Poor Pewitt!—If she can but be seen at public places, with a woman of quality, she’s the happiest of plebeians.—(*Reads the card.*)—

“*Mrs. Pewitt’s respects to Lady Minikin, and Miss Tittup; hopes to have the pleasure of attending them to Lady Filigree’s ball this evening.—Lady Daisey sees masks.*”—We’ll certainly attend her.—Gymp, put some message cards upon my toilet, I’ll send her an answer immediately; and tell one of my footmen, that he must make some visits for me to-day, again, and send me a list of those he made yesterday: he must be sure to call at Lady Pettitoes, and if she should

unluckily be at home, he must say that he came to inquire after her sprained ankle. [*Exit Gyp*, L.H.]

Miss T. Ay, ay, give our compliments to her sprained ankle.

Lady M. That woman's so fat, she'll never get well of it, and I am resolved not to call at her door myself, till I am sure of not finding her at home.—I am horribly low spirited to-day: do send your colonel to play at chess with me—since he belonged to you, Titty, I have taken a kind of liking to him; I like every thing that loves my Titty.

Miss T. I know you do, my dear lady.

Lady M. That sneer I don't like; if she suspects I shall hate her.—(*Aside.*)—Well, dear Titty, I'll go and write my cards, and dress for the masquerade, and if that won't raise my spirits, you must assist me to plague my lord a little. [*Exit*, L.H.]

Miss T. Yes, and I'll plague my lady a little, or I am much mistaken. My lord shall know every tittle that has passed: what a poor, blind, half-witted, self-conceited creature this dear friend and relation of mine is! and what a fine, spirited, gallant soldier my colonel is! my Lady Minikin likes him, he likes my fortune; my lord likes me, and I like my lord; however, not so much as he imagines, or to play the fool so rashly as he may expect.—What a great revolution in this family, in the space of fifteen months!—We went out of England, a very awkward, regular, good English family; but half a year in France, and a winter passed in the warmer climate of Italy, have ripened our minds to every refinement of ease, dissipation, and pleasure.

Enter COLONEL TIVY, L.H.

Col. T. May I hope, madam, that your humble servant had some share in your last reverie?

Miss T. How is it possible to have the least knowledge of Colonel Tivy, and not make him the principal object of one's reflections?

Col. T. That man must have very little feeling and taste, who is not proud of a place in the thoughts of the finest woman in Europe.

Miss T. O fye, colonel! (*Curtsies and blushes.*)

Col. T. By my honour, madam, I mean what I say.

Miss T. By your honour, colonel! why will you pass off your counters to me? don't I know that you fine gentlemen regard no honour but that which is given at the gaming table; and which indeed ought to be the only honour you should make free with?

Col. T. How can you, miss, treat me so cruelly? have I not absolutely forsworn dice, mistress, every thing, since I dared to offer myself to you?

Miss T. Yes, colonel, and when I dare to receive you, you may return to every thing again, and not violate the laws of the present happy matrimonial establishment.

Col. T. Give me but your consent, madam, and your life to come—

Miss T. Do you get my consent, colonel, and I'll take care of my life to come.

Col. T. How shall I get your consent?

Miss T. By getting me in the humour.

Col. T. But how to get you in the humour?

Miss T. O, there are several ways; I am very good-natured.

Col. T. Are you in the humour now?

Miss T. Try me.

Col. T. How shall I?

Miss T. How shall I?—you a soldier, and not know the art military?—how shall I?—I'll tell you how;—when you have a subtle, treacherous, politic enemy to deal with, never stand shilly-shally, and lose your time in treaties and parlies, but cock your hat, draw your sword;—march, beat drum,—dub, dub, a-dub—present, fire, piff pauff,—'tis done! they fly, they yield—Victoria! Victoria!

(*Running off.*)

Col. T. Stay, stay, my dear, dear angel!

(*Bringing her back.*)

Miss T. No, no, no, I have no time to be killed now; besides, Lady Minikin is in the vapours, and wants you at chess, and my lord is low-spirited, and wants me at picquet; my uncle is in an ill humour, and wants me to discard you, and go with him into the country.

Col. T. And will you, miss?

Miss T. Will I!—no, I never do as I am bid: but you ought;—so go to my lady.

Col. T. Nay, but, miss—

Miss T. Nay, but, colonel, if you wont obey your commanding officer, you should be broke, and then my maid wont accept of you; so march, colonel!—look'ee, sir, I will command before marriage, and do what I please afterwards, or I have been well educated to very little purpose.

[Exit, R.H.]

Col. T. What a mad devil it is!—Now, if I had the least affection for the girl, I should be damnably vexed at this!—but she has a fine fortune, and I must have her if I can.—Tol, lol, lol, &c.

[Exit, singing, R.H.]

Enter SIR JOHN TROTLEY and DAVY, L.H.

Sir John. Hold your tongue, Davy; you talk like a fool.

Davy. It is a fine place, your honour, and I could live here for ever.

Sir John. More shame for you:—live here for ever!—what, among thieves and pickpockets!—what a revolution since my time! the more I see, the more I've cause for lamentation; what a dreadful change has time brought about in twenty years! I should not have known the place again, nor the people;—all the signs, that made so noble an appearance, are all taken down;—not a bob or a tie-wig to be seen; all the degrees, from the Parade in St. James's Park, to the stool and brush at the corner of every street, have their hair tied up—and that's the reason so many heads are tied up every month.

Davy. I shall have my head tied up to-morrow; Mr. Wisp will do it for me—your honour and I look like Philistines among 'em.

Sir John. And I shall break your head if it is tied up; I hate innovations;—all confusion, and no distinction!—the streets now are as smooth as a turnpike-road! no rattling and exercise in the hackney-coaches; those who ride in 'em are all fast asleep; and they have strings in their hands, that the coachman must pull to wake 'em when they are to be set down;—what luxury and abomination!

Davy. Is it so, your honour; 'feckins, I like it hugely.

Sir John. But you must hate and detest London.

Davy. How can I manage that, your honour, when there is every thing to delight my eye, and cherish my heart?

Sir John. 'Tis all deceit and delusion.

Davy. Such crowding, coaching, carting, and squeezing; such a power of fine sights: fine shops full of fine things; and then such fine illuminations all of a row! and such fine dainty ladies in the streets, so civil and so graceless;—they talk of country girls: these here look more healthy and rosy by half.

Sir John. Sirrah, they are prostitutes, and are civil to delude and destroy you.

Davy. Bless us, bless us!—how does your honour know all this!—were they as bad in your time?

Sir John. Not by half, Davy;—in my time there was a sort of decency in the worst of women;—but the harlots now watch like tigers for their prey; and drag you to their dens of infamy—see, Davy, how they have torn my neck-cloth. *(Shews his neckcloth.)*

Davy. If you had gone civilly, your honour, they would not have hurt you.

Sir John. Well, we'll get away as fast as we can.

Davy. Not this month, I hope, for I have not had half my belly-full yet.

Sir John. I'll knock you down, Davy, if you grow profligate; you sha'n't go out again to-night, and to-morrow keep in my room, and stay till I can look over my things and see they don't cheat you.

Davy. Your honour then wont keep your word with me? *(Sulkily.)*

Sir John. Why, what did I promise you?

Davy. That I should take sixpen'oth of one of the theatres to-night, and a shilling place at the other to-morrow.

Sir John. Well, well, so I did:—is it a moral piece, Davy?

Davy. O yes, and written by a clergyman; it is called the 'Rival Cannanites; or the Tragedy of Braggadocia.'

Sir John. Be a good lad, and I wont be worse than my word; there's money for you:—*(Gives him money.)*—but come strait home, for I shall want to go to-bed.

Davy. To be sure, your honour—as I am to go so soon, I'll make a night of it. *[Aside, and exit, L.H.]*

Sir John. This fellow would turn rake and macaroni if he was to stay here a week longer—bless me, what dangers are in this town at every step!—My niece Lucretia, is so be-fashioned and be-devilled that nothing, I fear, can save her; however, to ease my conscience, I must try; but what can be expected from the young women of these times, but sallow looks, wild schemes, saucy words, and loose morals!—They lie a-bed all day, sit up all night; if they are silent, they are gaming, and if they talk, 'tis either scandal or infidelity; and that they may look what they are, their heads are all feather, and round their necks are twisted rattle-snake tippets.—O tempora, O mores! [*Exit*, R.H.]

SCENE II.—*Lord Minikin's Dressing Room.*

LORD MINIKIN *discovered in his powdering-gown, with JESSAMY and MIGNON.*

Lord M. Pr'ythee, Mignon, don't plague me any more; dost think that a nobleman's head has nothing to do but be tortured all day under thy infernal fingers? give me my clothes.

Mignon. Ven you lose your monee, my lor, you no goot humour; the devil may dress your cheveu for me!

[*Exit*, L.H.D.]

Lord M. That fellow's an impudent rascal, but he's a genius, so I must bear with him.—O, my head!—a chair, Jessamy!—I must absolutely change my wine-merchant: I can't taste his champagne without disordering myself for a week!—heigho. (*Sighs.*)

Enter Miss TITTUP, L.H.—She passes over to R.H. of Lord Minikin's chair.

Miss T. What makes you sigh, my lord?

Lord M. Because you were so near me, child.

Miss T. Indeed! I should rather have thought my lady had been with you—by your looks, my lord, I am afraid Fortune jilted you last night.

Lord M. No, faith; our champagne was not good yesterday, and I am vapoured like our English November; but one glance of my Tittup can dispel vapours like—like—

Miss T. Like something very fine to be sure: but pray

keep your simile for the next time ;—and hark'ee—a little prudence will not be amiss ; Mr. Jessamy will think you mad, and me worse. *(Half aside.)*

Jessamy. O, pray don't mind me, madam.

Lord M. Gadso, Jessamy, look out my domino, and I'll ring the bell when I want you.

Jessamy. I shall, my lord.—Miss thinks that every body is blind in the house but herself. *[Aside, and exit, L.H.D.]*

Miss T. Upon my word, my lord, you must be a little more prudent, or we shall become the town-talk.

Lord M. And so I will, my dear ; and therefore to prevent surprize, I'll lock the door.

Miss T. What do you mean, my lord ?

Lord M. Prudence, child, prudence ; I keep all my jewels under lock and key.

Miss T. You are not in possession yet, my lord ; I cannot stay two minutes ; I only came to tell you that Lady Minikin saw us yesterday, in the hackney-coach ; she did not know me, I believe ; she pretends to be greatly uneasy at your neglect of her ; she certainly has some mischief in her head.

Lord M. No intentions, I hope, of being fond of me ?

Miss T. No, no, make yourself easy ; she hates you most unalterably.

Lord M. You have given me spirits again.

Miss T. Her pride is alarmed, that you should prefer any of the sex to her.

Lord M. Her pride then has been alarmed ever since I had the honour of knowing her.

Miss T. But, dear my lord, let us be merry and wise ; should she ever be convinced that we have a *tendre* for each other, she certainly would proclaim it, and then—

Lord M. We should be envied, and she would be laughed at, my sweet cousin.

Miss T. Nay, I would have her mortified too—for though I love her ladyship sincerely, I cannot say but I love a little mischief as sincerely ; but then if my uncle Trotley should know of our affairs, he is so old-fashioned, prudish, and out-of-the-way, he would either strike me out of his will, or insist upon my quitting the house.

Lord M. My good cousin is a queer mortal, that's certain ;

I wish we could get him handsomely into the country again—he has a fine fortune to leave behind him.

Miss T. But then he lives so regularly, and never makes use of a physician, that he may live these twenty years.

Lord M. What can we do with the barbarian?

Miss T. I don't know what's the matter with me, but I am really in fear of him; I suppose, reading his formal books when I was in the country with him, and going so constantly to church, with my elbows stuck to my hips, and my toes turned in, has given me these foolish prejudices.

Lord M. Then you must affront him, or you'll never get the better of him.

Sir John. (*Knocking without, at L.H.D.*) My lord, my lord, are you busy? (*Lord Minikin goes softly to L.H.D.*)

Miss T. Heavens! 'tis that detestable brute, my uncle!

Lord M. That horrid dog, my cousin!

Miss T. What shall we do, my lord? (*Softly.*)

Sir John. (*At L.H.D.*) Nay, my lord, my lord, I heard you; pray let me speak with you.

Lord M. Ho, Sir John, is it you? I beg your pardon, I'll put up my papers and open the door.

Miss T. Stay, stay, my lord, I would not meet him now for the world; if he sees me here alone with you, he'll rave like a madman; put me up the chimney; any where.

(*Alarmed.*)

Lord M. (*Aloud.*) I'm coming, Sir John! here, here, get behind my great chair; he sha'n't see you, and you may see all; I'll be short and pleasant with him.

(*Puts her behind the chair, and opens L.H.D.*)

Enter SIR JOHN, L.H.D.—During this scene Lord Minikin turns the chair, as Sir John moves, to conceal Miss T.

Sir John. You'll excuse me, my lord, that I have broken in upon you: I heard you talking pretty loud; what have you nobody with you? what were you about, cousin?

(*Looking about.*)

Lord M. A particular affair, Sir John; I always lock myself up to study my speeches, and speak 'em aloud for the sake of the tone and action.

Sir John. (Sits down.) Ay, ay, 'tis the best way; I am sorry I disturbed you;—you'll excuse me, cousin!

Lord M. I am rather obliged to you, Sir John; intense application to these things ruins my health; but one must do it for the sake of the nation.

Sir John. May be so, I hope the nation will be the better for't—you'll excuse me!

Lord M. Excuse you, Sir John, I love your frankness; but why wont you be franker still? we have always something for dinner, and you will never dine at home.

Sir John. You must know, my lord, that I love to know what I eat;—I hate to travel, where I don't know my way: and since you have brought in foreign fashions and figaries, every thing and every body are in masquerade: your men and manners too are as much frittered and fricasied, as your beef and mutton; I love a plain dish, my lord.—But to the point;—I came, my lord, to open my mind to you about my niece Tittup; shall I do it freely?

Lord M. The freer the better; Tittup's a fine girl, cousin, and deserves all the kindness you can show her.

(Lord M. and Miss T. make signs at each other.)

Sir John. She must deserve it though, before she shall have it; and I would have her begin with lengthening her petticoats, covering her shoulders, and wearing a cap upon her head.

Lord M. Don't you think a taper leg, falling shoulders, and fine hair, delightful objects, Sir John?

Sir John. And therefore ought to be concealed; 'tis their interest to conceal them; when you take from the men the pleasure of imagination, there will be a scarcity of husbands; and then taper legs, falling shoulders, and fine hair, may be had for nothing.

Lord M. Well said, Sir John; Ha, ha!—your niece shall wear a horseman's coat and jack-boots to please you.—Ha, ha, ha!

Sir John. You may sneer, my lord, but for all that, I think my niece in a bad way; she must leave me and the country, forsooth, to travel and see good company and fashions; I have seen 'em too, and wish from my heart that she is not much the worse for her journey—you'll excuse me!

Lord M. But why in a passion, Sir John?—Don't you think that my lady and I shall be able and willing to put her into the road?

Sir John. Zounds! my lord, you are out of it yourself; this comes of your travelling; all the town know how you and my lady live together; and I must tell you—you'll excuse me!—that my niece suffers by the bargain; prudence, my lord, is a very fine thing.

Lord M. So is a long neckcloth nicely twisted into a button hole, but I don't choose to wear one—you'll excuse me!

Sir John. I wish that he who first changed long neckcloths for such things as you wear, had the wearing of a twisted neckcloth that I would give him. *(Rises.)*

Lord M. Pry'thee, baronet, don't be so horribly out-of-the-way; prudence is a very vulgar virtue, and so incompatible with our present ease and refinement, that a prudent man of fashion is now as great a miracle as a pale woman of quality; we got rid of our *mauvais honte*, at the time that we imported our neighbour's rouge, and their morals.

Sir John. Did you ever hear the like! I am not surprized, my lord, that you think so lightly, and talk so vainly, who are so polite a husband; your lady, my cousin, is a fine woman, and brought you a fine fortune, and deserves better usage.

Lord M. Will you have her, Sir John? she is much at your service.

Sir John. Profligate!—What did you marry her for, my lord?

Lord M. Convenience.—Marriage is not now-a-days, an affair of inclination, but convenience; and they who marry for love, and such old-fashioned stuff, are to me as ridiculous as those that advertise for an agreeable companion in a post-chaise.

Sir John. *(Crosses to R.H.)* I have done, my lord; Miss Tittup shall either return with me into the country, or not a penny shall she have from Sir John Trotley, Baronet.—*(Whistles and walks about.)*—Pray, my lord, what husband is this you have provided for her?

Lord M. A friend of mine; a man of wit, and a fine gentleman.

Sir John. May be so, and yet make a damned bad husband

for all that. You'll excuse me!—What estate has he, pray?

Lord M. He's a colonel; his elder brother, Sir Tan Tivy, will certainly break his neck, and then my friend will be a happy man.

Sir John. Here's morals! a happy man when his brother has broke his neck!—a happy man—mercy on me!

Lord M. Why, he'll have six thousand a year, Sir John—

Sir John. I don't care what he'll have, nor I don't care what he is, nor who my niece marries; she is a fine lady, and let her have a fine gentleman; I sha'n't hinder her;—*(Crosses to L.H.)*—I'll away into the country to-morrow, and leave you to your fine doings; I have no relish for 'em, not I; I can't live among you, nor eat with you, nor game with you; I hate cards and dice; I will neither rob nor be robbed; I am contented with what I have, and am very happy, my lord, though my brother has not broke his neck—you'll excuse me! *[Exit L.H.D.]*

Lord M. Ha, ha, ha! Come, fox, come out of your hole! ha, ha, ha!

Miss T. Indeed, my Lord, you have undone me; not a foot shall I have of Trotley Manor, that's positive!—but no matter, there's no danger of his breaking his neck, so I'll e'en make myself happy with what I have, and behave to him for the future, as if he was a poor relation.

Lord M. *(Kneeling, snatching her hand, and kissing it.)* I must kneel and adore you for your spirit; my sweet, heavenly Lucretia!

Re-enter SIR JOHN, L.H.D.

Sir John. *(Starts.)*—One thing I had forgot—

Miss T. Ha! he's here again!

Sir John. Why, what the devil!—heigho, my niece Lucretia, and my virtuous lord, studying speeches for the good of the nation.—Yes, yes, you have been making fine speeches, indeed, my Lord; and your arguments have prevailed, I see. I beg your pardon, I did not mean to interrupt your studies—you'll excuse me, my lord! *(Crosses to Centre.)*

Lord M. (Smiling, and mocking him.)—You'll excuse me, Sir John!

Sir John. O yes, my lord, but I'm afraid the devil wont excuse you at the proper time—Miss Lucretia, how do you, child? You are to be married soon—I wish the gentleman joy, Miss Lucretia; he is a happy man to be sure, and will want nothing but the breaking of his brother's neck to be completely so.

Miss T. Upon my word, uncle, you are always putting bad constructions upon things; my lord has been soliciting me to marry his friend—and having that moment—extorted a consent from me—he was thanking—and—and—wishing me joy—in his foolish manner.—(*Hesitating.*)

Sir John. Is that all!—but how came you here, child?—did you fly down the chimney, or in at the window? for I don't remember seeing you when I was here before.

Miss T. How can you talk so, Sir John?—You really confound me with your suspicions;—and then you ask so many questions, and I have so many things to do, that—that—upon my word, if I don't make haste, I shan't get my dress ready for the ball, so I must run—You'll excuse me, uncle!

[*Exit running, L.H.D.*]

Sir John. A fine hopeful young lady that, my lord!

Lord M. She's well bred, and has wit.

Sir John. She has wit and breeding enough to laugh at her relations, and bestow favours on your lordship, but I must tell you plainly, my lord, you'll excuse me, that your marrying your lady, my cousin, to use her ill, and sending for my niece, your cousin, to debauch her—

Lord M. You're warm, Sir John, and don't know the world, and I never contend with ignorance and passion; live with me some time, and you'll be satisfied of my honour and good intentions to you and your family; in the mean time command my house;—(*Crosses to L.H.D.*)—I must away immediately to Lady Filligree's—and I am sorry you wont make one with us—here, Jessamy, give me my domino, and call a chair; and don't let my uncle want for any thing; you'll excuse me, Sir John; tol, lol, derol, &c.

[*Exit singing, L.H.D.*]

Sir John. The world's at an end!—here's fine work! here are precious doings! this lord is a pillar of the state too: no

wonder that the building is in danger with such rotten supporters;—heigh ho!—and then my poor Lady Minikin, what a friend and husband she is blessed with!—let me consider!—should I tell the good woman of these pranks, I may only make more mischief, and mayhap go near to kill her, for she's as tender as she's virtuous;—poor lady! I'll e'en go and comfort her directly, and endeavour to draw her from the wickedness of this town into the country, where she shall have reading, fowling, and fishing to keep up her spirits, and when I die, I will leave her that part of my fortune, with which I intended to reward the virtues of Miss Lucretia Tittup, with a plague to her! [Exit, L.H.D.]

SCENE III.—*Lady Minikin's Apartment.*

LADY MINIKIN, R.H. and COLONEL TIVY, L.H. *discovered.*

Lady M. Don't urge it, colonel; I can't think of coming home from the masquerade this evening; though I should pass for my niece, it would make an uproar among the servants; and perhaps from the mistake break off your match with Tittup.

Col. T. My dear Lady Minikin, you know my marriage with your niece is only a secondary consideration; my first and principal object is you—you, madam!—therefore, my dear lady, give me your promise to leave the ball with me; you must, Lady Minikin; a bold young fellow and a soldier as I am, ought not to be kept from plunder when the town has capitulated.

Lady M. But it has not capitulated, and perhaps never will; however, colonel, since you are so furious, I must come to terms, I think—Keep your eyes upon me at the ball, I think I may expect that, and when I drop my handkerchief, 'tis your signal for pursuing; I shall get home as fast as I can, you may follow me as fast you can;—Gymp will let us in the back way.—No, no, my heart misgives me!

Col. T. Then I am miserable!

Lady M. Nay, rather than you should be miserable, colonel, I will indulge your martial spirit; meet me in the field; there's my gauntlet.—(Throws down her glove.)

Col. T. (Seizing her.)—Thus I accept your sweet chal-

lence; and, if I fail you, may I hereafter both in love and war, be branded with the name of coward.

(Kneels and kisses her hand.)

Enter SIR JOHN opening the door, R.H.D.

Sir John. May I presume, cousin—

Lady M. Ha! *(Squalls.)*

Sir John. Mercy upon us, what are we at now!

(Looks astonished.)

Lady M. How can you be so rude, Sir John, to come into a lady's room without first knocking at the door? you have frightened me out of my wits!

Sir John. I am sure you have frightened me out of mine!

Col. T. Such rudeness deserves death!

Sir John. Death indeed! for I never shall recover myself again—All pigs of the same sty! all studying for the good of the nation!

Lady M. We must soothe him, and not provoke him.—

(Half aside to the Colonel.)

Col. T. I would cut his throat, if you'd permit me.

(Aside to Lady Minkin.)

Sir John. The devil has got his hoof in the house, and has corrupted the whole family; I'll get out of it as fast as I can, lest he should lay hold of me too. *(Going.)*

Lady M. Sir John, I must insist upon your not going away in a mistake.

Sir John. No mistake, my lady, I am thoroughly convinced—mercy on me!

Lady M. I must beg you, Sir John, not to make any wrong constructions upon this accident; you must know, that the moment you was at the door—I had promised the colonel no longer to be his enemy in his designs upon Miss Tittup,—this threw him into such a rapture,—that upon my promising my interest with you—and wishing him joy—he fell upon his knees, and—and—*(Laughing)*—ha, ha, ha!

Col. T. Ha, ha, ha! yes, yes, I fell upon my knees, and—and—

Sir John. Ay, ay, fell upon your knees, and—and—ha, ha! a very good joke, faith; and the best of it is, that they are wishing joy all over the house upon the same occasion: and

my lord is wishing joy; and I wish him joy, and you, with all my heart.

Lady M. Upon my word, Sir John, your cruel suspicions affect me strongly;—(*Crosses to R.H.D.*)—and though my resentment is curbed by my regard, my tears cannot be restrained; 'tis the only resource my innocence has left.

[*Exit crying, R.H.D.*]

Col. T. I reverence you, sir, as a relation to that Lady, but as her slanderer I detest you;—(*Crosses to R.H.*)—her tears must be dried, and my honour satisfied; you know what I mean; take your choice;—time, place, sword, or pistol; consider it calmly, and determine as you please. I am a soldier, Sir John.

[*Exit, R.H.D.*]

Sir John. Very fine truly! and so between the crocodile and the bully, my throat is to be cut; they are guilty of all sorts of iniquity, and when they are discovered, no humility, no repentance!—the ladies have recourse to their tongues or their tears, and the gallants to their swords.—That I may not be drawn in by the one, or drawn upon by the other, I'll hurry into the country while I retain my senses and can sleep in a whole skin.

[*Exit, R.H.D.*]

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*An Apartment at Lord Minikin's.*

Enter SIR JOHN and JESSAMY, L.H.

Sir John. There is no bearing this! what a land are we in! upon my word, Mr. Jessamy, you should look well to the house, there are certainly rogues about it: for I did but cross the way just now to the pamphlet-shop, to buy a touch of the times, and they had a pluck at my watch; but I heard of their tricks, and had it sewed to my pocket,

Jessamy. Don't be alarm'd, Sir John; 'tis a very common thing, and if you walk the streets without convoy, you will be picked up by privateers of all kinds; ha, ha!

Sir John. Not be alarmed when I am robbed!—why, they might have cut my throat! I shan't sleep a wink all night; so pray lend me some weapon of defence, for I am sure if they attack me in the open street, they'll be with me at night again.

Jessamy. I'll lend you my duelling pistols, Sir John; be assured there's no danger; there's robbing and murder cried every night under my window; but it no more disturbs me, than the ticking of my watch at my bed's head.

Sir John. Well, well, be that as it will, I must be upon guard. What a dreadful place this is! but 'tis all owing to the corruption of the times; the great folks game, and the poor folks rob; no wonder that murder ensues; sad, sad, sad!—well, let me but get over to-night, and I'll leave this den of thieves to-morrow—how long will your lord and lady stay at this masking and mummery before they come home?

Jessamy. 'Tis impossible to say the time, sir; that merely depends upon the spirits of the company and the nature of the entertainment; for my own part, I generally make it myself till four or five in the morning.

Sir John. Why, what the devil do you make one at these masqueradings?

Jessamy. I seldom miss, sir; I may venture to say that nobody knows grim and small talk of the place better than I do; I was always reckoned an incomparable mask.

Sir John. Thou art an incomparable coxcomb, I am sure.
(*Aside.*)

Jessamy. An odd, ridiculous accident happened to me at a masquerade three years ago; I was in tip-top spirits, and had drank a little too freely of the champagne, I believe.

Sir John. You'll be hanged, I believe.
(*Aside.*)

Jessamy. Wit flew about—in short I was in spirits—at last, from drinking and rattling, to vary the pleasure, we went to dancing; and who do you think I danced a minuet with? he! he! pray guess, Sir John!

Sir John. Danced a minuet with!
(*Half aside.*)

Jessamy. My own lady, that's all; the eyes of the whole assembly were upon us; my lady dances well, and I believe

I am pretty tolerable: after the dance I was running into a little coquetry and small talk with her.

Sir John. With your Lady?—Chaos is come again!

Jessamy. With my lady—but upon my turning my hand thus—*(Conceitedly)*—Egad, she caught me; whispered me who I was; I would fain have laughed her out of it, but it would not do;—no, no, Jessamy, says she, I am not to be deceived: pray wear gloves for the future; for you may as well go bare-faced, as show that hand and diamond ring.

Sir John. What a sink of iniquity!—Prosecution on all sides! from the lord to the pickpocket.—*(Aside.)*—Pray, Mr. Jessamy, among your other virtues, I suppose you game a little, eh, Mr. Jessamy?

Jessamy. A little whilst or so;—but I am tied up from the dice; I must never touch a box again.

Sir John. I wish you was tied up somewhere else.—*(Aside.)*—I shall go to my room; and let my lord and lady, and my niece Tittup know, that I beg they will excuse ceremony: that I must be up and gone before they go to bed; that I have a most profound respect and love for them, and—and—that I hope we shall never see one another again as long as we live.

Jessamy. I shall certainly obey your commands—what poor ignorant wretches these country gentlemen are!

Sir John. If I stay in this place another day, it would throw me into a fever!—Oh!—I wish it was morning!—this comes of visiting my relations!

Enter DAVY, drunk, L.H.

So, you wicked wretch you—where have you been, and what have you been doing?

Davy. Merry-making, your honour—London for a night!

Sir John. And did I not order you not to make a Jackanapes of yourself, and tie your hair up like a monkey?

Davy. And therefore I did it—no pleasing the ladies with out this—my lord's servants call you an old out-of-fashioned codger, and have taught me what's what.

Sir John. Here's an imp of the devil!—he is undone, and will poison the whole country.—Sirrah, get every thing ready, I'll be going directly.

Davy. To bed, sir!—I want to go to bed myself, sir.

Sir John. Why how now—you are drunk too, sirrah.

Davy. I am a little, your honour, because I have been drinking.

Sir John. That is not all—but you have been in bad company, sirrah!

Davy. Indeed your honour's mistaken, I never kept such good company in all my life.

Sir John. The fellow does not understand me—where have you been, you drunkard?

Davy. Drinking to be sure, if I am a drunkard; and if you had been drinking too, as I have been, you would not be in such a passion with a body—it makes one so good-natured.

Sir John. There is another addition to my misfortunes! I shall have this fellow carry into the country as many vices as will corrupt the whole parish.

Davy. I'll take what I can, to be sure, your worship.

Sir John. Get away, you beast you, and sleep off the debauchery you have contracted this fortnight, or I shall leave you behind, as a proper person to make one of his lordship's family.

Davy. So much the better—give me more wages, less work, and the key of the ale-cellar, and I am your servant; if not, provide yourself with another. (*Struts about.*)

Sir John. Here's a reprobate!—this is the completion of my misery! but hark'ee, villain—go to bed—and sleep off your iniquity, and then pack up the things, or I'll pack you off to Newgate, and transport you for life, you rascal you. [*Exit, R.H.*]

Davy. That for you, old codger.—(*Snaps his fingers.*)—I know the law better than to be frightened with moonshine: I wish that I was to live here all my days,—this is life indeed! a servant lives up to his eyes in clover; they have wages, and board wages, and nothing to do, but to grow fat and saucy—they are as happy as their master, they play for ever at cards, swear like emperors, drink like fishes, and go a wenching with as much ease and tran-

quillity, as if they were going to a sermon. Oh! 'tis a fine life!
[Exit, reeling, L.H.]

SCENE II.—*A Chamber in Lord Minikin's house.*

Enter LORD MINIKIN and MISS TITTUP, in masquerade dresses, lighted by JESSAMY, L.H.D.

Lord M. Set down the candles, Jessamy; and should your lady come home let me know—be sure you are not out of the way.

Jessamy. I have lived too long with your lordship to need the caution—who the devil have we got now? but that's my lord's business, and not mine. *[Exit, L.H.D.]*

Miss T. (Pulling off her mask.) Upon my word, my lord, this coming home so soon from the masquerade is very imprudent, and will certainly be observed—I am most inconceivably frightened, I can assure you—my uncle Trotley has a light in his room; the accident this morning will certainly keep him upon the watch—pray, my lord, let us defer our meetings till he goes into the country.—I find that my English heart, though it has ventured so far, grows fearful, and awkward to practise the freedoms of warmer climes.—*(Lord Minikin takes her by the hand.)*—If you will not desist, my lord—we are separated for ever—the sight of the precipice turns my head; I have been giddy with it too long, and must turn from it while I can—pray be quiet, my lord, I will meet you to-morrow.

Lord M. To-morrow! 'tis an age in my situation—let the weak, bashful, coyish whiner be intimidated with these faint alarms, but let the bold experienced lover kindle at the danger, and like the eagle in the midst of storms thus pounce upon his prey. *(Takes hold of her.)*

Miss T. Dear Mr. Eagle, be merciful; pray let the poor pigeon fly for this once.

Lord M. If I do, my dove, may I be cursed to have my wife as fond of me, as I am now of thee.

(Offers to kiss her.)

Jessamy. (Without, knocking at L.H.D.) My lord, my lord!—

Miss T. (Screams.) Ha!

Lord M. Who's there?

Jessamy. (Peeping.) 'Tis I, my lord; may I come in?

Lord M. Damn the fellow! What's the matter?

Jessamy. Nay, not much, my lord—only my lady's come home.

Miss T. Then I'm undone—what shall I do?—I'll run into my own room.

Lord M. Then she may meet you—

Jessamy. There's a dark deep closet, my lord—miss may hide herself there.

Miss T. For heaven's sake put me into it, and when her ladyship's safe, let me know, my lord.—What an escape have I had!

Lord M. The moment her evil spirit is laid, I'll let my angel out.—(*Puts her into L.H.D.F.*)—Lock the door on the inside.—Come softly to my room, Jessamy—

Jessamy. If a board creaks, your lordship shall never be liberal to me again. [*Exeunt, on tiptoe, R.H.*]

Enter GYMP, lighting in LADY MINIKIN and COLONEL TIVY, in masquerade dresses, L.H.D.

Gymp. Pray, my lady, go no farther with the colonel, I know you mean nothing but innocence, but I'm sure there will be bloodshed, for my lord is certainly in the house—I'll take my affidavit that I heard—

Col. T. It can't be, I tell you; we left him this moment at the masquerade—I spoke to him before I came out.

Lady M. He's too busy, and too well employed to think of home—but don't tremble so, *Gymp.* There is no harm, I assure you—the colonel is to marry my niece, and it is proper to settle some matters relating to it—they are left to us.

Gymp. Yes, yes, madam, to be sure it is proper that you talk together—I know you mean nothing but innocence—but indeed there will be bloodshed.

Col. T. The girl's a fool. I have no sword by my side.

Gymp. But my lord has, and you may kill one another with that—I know you mean nothing but innocence, but I certainly heard him go up the back-stairs into his own room, talking with Jessamy.

Lady M. 'Tis impossible but the girl must have fancied this—Can't you ask Whisp, or Mignon, if their master is come in?

Gymp. Lord, my lady, they are always drunk before this, and asleep in the kitchen.

Lady M. This frightened fool has made me as ridiculous as herself! hark!—Colonel, I'll swear there is something upon the stairs—now I am in the field I find I am a coward.

Gymp. There will certainly be bloodshed.

Col. T. I'll slip down with Gymp this back way then.

(*Going.*)

Gymp. O dear, my lady, there is something coming up them too.

Col. T. Zounds! I've got between two fires!

Lady M. Run into the closet.

Col. T. (*Runs to the closet.*) There's no retreat—the door is locked!

Lady M. Behind the chimney-board, Gymp.

Col. T. I shall certainly be taken prisoner—(*Gets behind the board, R.H. in flat.*)—you'll let me know when the enemy's decamped.

Lady M. Leave that to me—do you, Gymp, go down the back stairs, and leave me to face my lord, I think I can match him at hypocrisy. (*Sits down.*)

Enter LORD MINIKIN, R.H.

Lord M. What, is your ladyship so soon returned from Lady Fillagree's?

Lady M. (*Seated, L.H.*) I am sure, my lord, I ought to be more surprized at your being here so soon, when I saw you so well entertained in a *tete-à-tete* with a lady in crimson—such sights, my lord, will always drive me from my most favourite amusements.

Lord M. (*Seated, R.H.*) You find at least, that the lady, whoever she was, could not engage me to stay, when I found your ladyship had left the ball.

Lady M. Your lordship's sneering upon my unhappy temper may be a proof of your wit, but it is none of your humanity; and this behaviour is as great an insult upon me, as even your falsehood itself. (*Pretends to weep.*)

Lord M. Nay, my dear Lady Minikin, if you are resolved to play tragedy, I shall roar away too, and pull out my cambric handkerchief.

Lady M. I think, my lord, we had better retire to our apartments; my weakness and your brutality will only expose us to our servants.—Where is Tittup, pray?

Lord M. I left her with the colonel—a masquerade to young folks upon the point of matrimony, is as delightful as it is disgusting to those who are happily married, and are wise enough to love home, and the company of their wives.

(*Takes hold of her hand.*)

Lady M. False man!—I had as lieve a toad touched me.

(*Aside.*)

Lord M. She gives me the frisoone—I must propose to stay, or I shall never get rid of her.—(*Aside.*)—I am aguish to night,—he—he—do my dear let us make a little fire here, and have a family *tete-à-tete*, by way of novelty.

(*Rings a bell.*)

Enter JESSAMY, R.H.

Let 'em take away that chimney-board, and light a fire here immediately.

Lady M. What shall I do?—(*Aside, and greatly alarmed.*)—Here, Jessamy, there is no occasion—I am going to my own chamber, and my lord wont stay here by himself.

[*Exit Jessamy, R.H.*]

Lord M. How cruel it is, Lady Minikin, to deprive me of the pleasure of a domestic duetto.—A good escape, faith!

(*Aside.*)

Lady M. I have too much regard for Lord Minikin to agree to any thing that would afford him so little pleasure.—I shall retire to my own apartment.

Lord M. Well, if your ladyship will be cruel, I must still, like the miser, starve and sigh, though possessed of the greatest treasure.—(*Bows.*)—I wish your ladyship a good night.—(*He takes one candle, and Lady Minikin the other.*)—May I presume—

(*Salutes her.*)

Lady M. Your lordship is too obliging.—Nasty man!

(*Aside.*)

Lord M. Disagreeable woman,—(*Aside.*)—[*They wipe their lips and exeunt; Lady M. L.H. Lord M. R.H. ceremoniously.*]

Miss T. (*Peeping out of the closet.*) All's silent now, and quite dark; what has been doing here I cannot guess—I long to be relieved; I wish my lord was come—but I hear a noise! (*She shuts the door.*)

Col. T. (*Peeping over the chimney-board.*) I wonder my lady does not come.—I would not have Miss Tittup know of this—'twould be ten thousand pounds out of my way, and I can't afford to give so much for a little gallantry.

Miss T. (*Comes forward.*) What would my colonel say, to find his bride, that is to be, in this critical situation?

Enter LORD MINIKIN, R.H. in the dark.

Lord M. Now to release my prisoner.

(*Comes forward, L.H.*)

Enter LADY MINIKIN, L.H.D.

Lady M. My poor colonel will be as miserable, as if he were besieged in garrison; I must release him.

(*Going towards the chimney.*)

Lord M. Hist! hist!

Miss T.

Lord M. } Here! here!

Col. T. }

Lord M. This way.

Lady M. Softly.—(*They all grope till Lord Minikin has got Lady Minikin, and the Colonel Miss T.*)

Sir John. (*Speaks without, L.H.*) Lights this way, I say; get a blunderbuss.

Jessamy. Indeed you dreamt it, there is nobody but the family. (*All stand and stare.*)

Enter SIR JOHN, L.H. in his night-cap, and sword drawn, with JESSAMY.

Sir John. Give me the candle, I'll ferret 'em out, I warrant; bring a blunderbuss, I say; they have been skipping

about that gallery in the dark this half hour; there must be mischief.—I have watched them into this room—ho, ho, are you there?—If you stir, you are dead men—(*They retire.*)—and—(*Seeing the ladies.*)—women too!—egad—ha! what's this? the same party again! and two couple they are of as choice mortals as ever were hatched in this righteous town—you'll excuse me, cousins!

(*They all look confounded.*)

Lord M. In the name of wonder, how comes all this about?

Sir John. Well, but hark'ee, my dear cousins, have you not got wrong partners?—here has been some mistake in the dark; I am mightily glad that I have brought you a candle to set all to rights again—you'll excuse me gentlemen and ladies.

Enter GYMP, R.H. with a candle.

Gymp. What in the name of mercy is the matter?

Sir John. Why the old matter, and the old game, Mrs. Gymp; and I'll match my cousins here at it against all the world, and I say done first.

Lord M. What is the meaning, Sir John, of all this tumult and consternation? may not Lady Minikin and I, and the colonel and your niece, be seen in my house together without your raising the family, and making this uproar and confusion?

Sir John. Come, come, good folks, I see you are all confounded, I'll settle this matter in a moment—as for you, colonel—though you have not deserved plain dealing from me, I will now be serious:—(*Crosses to Colonel.*)—you imagine this young lady has an independent fortune, besides expectations from me—'tis a mistake, she has no expectations from me, if she marry you; and if I don't consent to her marriage, she will have no fortune at all.

Col. T. Plain dealing is a jewel; and to show you, Sir John, that I can pay you in kind, I am most sincerely obliged to you for your intelligence; and I am, ladies, your most obedient humble servant.—(*Crosses to L.H.*)—I shall see you, my lord, at the club, to-morrow?— [*Exit, L.H.*]

Lord M. *Sans doute, mon cher colonel.*—I'll meet you there without fail.

Sir John. My lord, you'll have something else to do.

Lord M. Indeed ! what is that, good Sir John ?

Sir John. You must meet your lawyers and creditors to-morrow, and be told what you have always turned a deaf ear to—that the dissipation of your fortune and morals must be followed by years of parsimony and repentance—as you are fond of going abroad, you may indulge that inclination without having it in your power to indulge any other.

Lord M. The bumpkin is no fool, and is damned satirical.

(*Aside.*)

Sir John. You are silent ladies—if repentance has subdued your tongues, I shall have hopes of you—a little country air might perhaps do well—as you are distressed, I am at your service—what say you, my lady ?

Lady M. However appearances have condemned me, give me leave to disavow the substance of those appearances. My mind has been tainted, but not profligate—your kindness and example may restore me to my former natural English constitution.

Sir John. Will you resign your lady to me, my lord, for a time ?

Lord M. For ever, dear Sir John, without a murmur.

Sir John. Well, miss, and what say you ?

Miss T. Guilty, uncle.

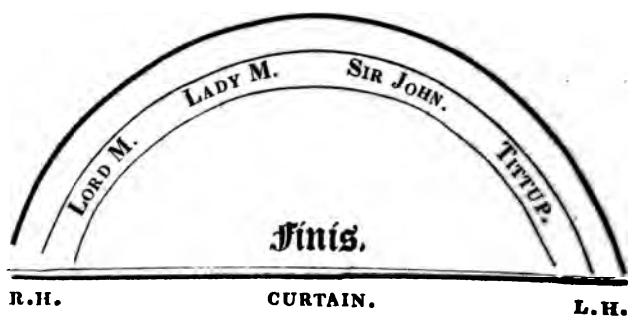
(*Curtasying.*)

Sir John. Guilty ! the devil you are ? of what ?

Miss T. Of consenting to marry one whom my heart does not approve, and coquetting with another which friendship, duty, honour, morals, and every thing, but fashion, ought to have forbidden.

Sir John. Thus then, with the wife of one under this arm, and the mistress of another under this, I sally forth a Knight Errant, to rescue distressed damsels from those monsters, foreign vices, and *Bon Ton*, as they call it ; and I trust that every English hand and heart here will assist me in so desperate an undertaking.—You'll excuse me, sirs !

Disposition of the Characters when the Curtain falls.



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